[121 cont.]

differentiation between magic and religion, and between play as such and drama. But these four things are so interlaced that it is not possible to take each one of these aspects separately for analysis or even for presentation. If the whole appears clear we shall be satisfied. Our intention in this study has been to present facts in the most objective manner possible without neglecting, obviously, to interpret at times when it has seemed necessary or when we have felt capable of doing so.

As we have said, whether what is presented in the Dance of the Kid is magic or religion, it is a matter that might lend itself to Byzantine discussions by which nothing of the subject would be cleared up. On the contrary, they would further confuse it and take away opportunities to make known one of the most interesting aspects of the spiritual life of the Goajiro, in which are broken many of their social traditions, or rather their everyday cultural patterns, and in which they have an opportunity to show their dexterity more than their capacity as actors, since it must not be thought that what we have described as theater is such in the true sense of the word but rather corresponds to the beginnings of that art, the beginning of representation, without finality in themselves but as propitiation of rain and good harvests, as integral parts of a complete ritual which includes dances, songs, and representations of natural scenes or incidents taken from mythology.

What has given us occasion to call this theater or, if one prefers, drama is the concurrence in the representation of scenes of a small number of the participants at the Fiesta, or Dance, of the Kid and the presence of a great number of the other participants who fill the role of spectators. [122]

It also frequently occurs that each group that takes part in the play is headed by a minstrel, or singer, who narrates each event as it occurs; the language he employs is dramatic, and he uses the most attractive turns of speech. The verbal music is added to the drama though not in the form of massed choirs but is expressed by each of the leaders who guide the actions of the participants in the scene that is being represented. Unfortunately, these songs have not been traditionally preserved but are rather improvised for the occasion. Only the music has endured

[122 cont.]

unchanged, composed by some Indian, namely by an inhabitant from the Jarara district -- which is the cradle of their poetry and their music, according to the statements of these same natives. They adapt the verbal part of the play to this music as the representation progresses.

The Dance of the Kid is celebrated when the rains arrive, when the ahuyamas, the watermelons, and the kidney beans are growing. It is practically a ceremonial rite by which they celebrate the beginning of the rains and the appearance of fruit. At this dance, which is celebrated at night and during consecutive weeks and even months, whoever wishes to do so joins in, since the invitation consists of the beat of the drum, a characteristic of these occasions.

There are two special dances which are performed in the following way: In the first, each Indian moves around with a female partner, in line one behind the other, and holding each other by the waist, they walk in the direction taken by the leading couple. The song which may go like this begins: "Lend me your partner so I may travel with her." They then make a turn. On doing this, the first Indian takes the partner of the second, and so on successively down the line. The dance continues with these turns and progresses forward until the first pair are reunited.

In the other dance each man takes a partner, an unmarried woman as a general rule. They take hold of hands, doing the same with the other couples that join in the dance. Once hands are grasped, they all walk in line but neither forward nor backward but to right and left. Then, hands still grasped, they run in circles, having the first in the line as the axis, until they fall to the ground impelled by the speed their racing around has given them; then they rise and start the dance over again.

The dance begins at about six in the afternoon and lasts until midnight. At this hour all the participants return to their homes but come back again on the following and every succeeding night until the cycle of the beginning of the rains, the collecting of the crops, or the ripening of the fruit has been fulfilled. [123]

The ceremony we have been describing has three special

2: Pineda Giraldo--147 E-6 (1947) 1980 GC13 Guajiro GC13

[139 cont.]

this moment the owner of the goats arrives to look over his flock, and he states in his song that some of his animals are missing, they are fat because pasture is fresh and abundant, and he announces that he is about to thank them. He starts by taking out each female goat one by one and proceeds to cut its ear, which is the way to mark such animals. He keeps up his song, referring to what he is doing. "I have many goats and now I shall lack neither meat nor milk. I am rich...."

e) We would add to the above the fact that Indian girls of the wealthy class do not take part in these gatherings, or they do so on very rare occasions, as their prestige [139] would diminish seriously in consequence of the opinion held of the fiesta that only those girls go to it who want to get a husband readily or to satisfy their sexual urges. Besides, it is the obligation of each man to flirt with or court with familiarity the girl who becomes his partner in the dance, and her obligation is to supply him during the dance with roasted corn, bread, meat, chicha, etc.

Summarizing up to this point, we can state that the Dance of the Kid is a festival in which the Guajiro Indians seek to propitiate the rains at the same time that it celebrates their arrival and fecundity: fecundity in fruit, fecundity in animals, as dramatized in the ceremonies just described, and fecundity among men, in human beings, who are free from the restrictions which are imposed on them by the community in ordinary daily life to maintain social order.

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Theatrical representations. "Drama is particularly difficult to classify because so often it gets mixed up with religion.... On the other hand, dramatic scenes can be executed for collective entertainment or as farces with no special pretentions, as for example in a Tahitian pantomime which represents the theft of a basket of food from a sleeping servant; although it can occur, on occasion, that these simple and uncertain experiments develop into real dramas." (65)

65. Lowie. Antropología Cultural [Cultural Anthropology]. XI, 194-196.

B. Pineda Gonzalo--148 8-6 (1947) 1658 SC13 Guajiro SC13

[138 cont.]

Lowie's words, which we have just quoted, serve us well for what we have wished to call theatrical representations in La Guajira, as these also are but simple forms in which they seek to represent some act in the life of the community, in their mythology, or from scenes from the natural life surrounding them, to the midst of the ceremonies that are organized to celebrate the arrival of the rain, the preparation of them, and the ripening of the fruits [of the soil]. Naturally, as we stated at the beginning, this ceremony is an inseparable whole up to a certain point, a totality in which the most trivial diversions, such as these unimportant representations and some games, are mixed with astoundingly important actions such as the transgression of social persons in the satisfaction of sexual impulses, which we have just described and analyzed and in which the organization norms are utterly discarded, tradition is broken, and they give free rein to wantonness and [139] pleasure. It is above all a rite. But as Lowie himself affirms: "It is frequent that these important rituals present dramatic elements, because of which it was sometimes believed that a ceremony was nothing more than a dramatized myth. Now we know that when myth and ritual are found associated, more frequently the former has been added later, whether or not it be more ancient.... In short, the ceremonial of primitives at times is something more than pomp, and it can raise itself to the height of a true theatrical representation." (66)

66. Lowie. Op. cit., XVII, 316.

It is curious, nevertheless, that in the celebrations of this fiesta dedicated to the propitiation of the rain, nothing related to the myths about them is to be found. Representations of fecundity abound in many of its aspects, as we have just seen in the description of the sexual aspect. But there is no representation related to the rains, at any rate none known to us, unless it be one where the devil and a cloud intervene, or the devil and smoke, as the word to designate the two concepts -- cloud and smoke -- is the same in Guajiro, sirüma. In this dramatization, which we shall describe later, the cloud triumphs over the devil. It could be interpreted as the triumph of the rain over the long

526 796 [132 cont.]
men and animals, or men alone, as in the description of a
putchi, or interclan war. This demonstration of skill and ability
535 796 in their plays is shown very clearly in the chicha-maya dance,
which will be fully detailed in the descriptive aspect of Guajiro
culture shortly to be published. This dance, in general terms,
is restricted to a veritable struggle between the man and the
woman who are partners, a struggle in which the woman en-
deavors to overthrow the man.

536 796 However, in the plays of a mythical nature the scene is
more limited and always ends in the same way. It is static in
the sense that its conclusion cannot be changed by the ability
of the players but is determined by a prearranged plot, rigidly
imposed for each occasion it is played. This we believe is
what gives it its true mythical nature. It is part of the oral tradi-
tion of the group, and for this reason it cannot be subject to
variations determined by the moment.

Having made these general statements about their theatri-
cal plays, or dramas, we will now describe them one by one,
showing first those that refer to social life, then those relative to
the mythical aspect, and finally those in which animals only,
or animals with men, appear.

1. Visit between Upper and Lower La Guajira. Two groups
take part in this play, each composed of men and women. The
first represents Upper La Guajira, the other, Lower La Guajira.
The groups line up in two parallel rows [133] spaced a cuadra
apart. The components of each group hold each other round the
waist, face to face, with a small space between them. The
536 singer who heads the team of Indians that represents Upper La
539 796 Guajira begins by addressing the visitors from Lower Guajira,
"Amsh pif (Have you arrived?)." "Aaa (Yes)," replies the other.
"Kasfchicki (What's new?)," asks the first singer. "Nohots
(Nothing new)," replies his opposite number from the south coun-
try. Again he of the north asks, "How goes the winter? Have the
expected rains finally arrived?" The other answers, "we are well
content. The rains have come so our crops are in good condition.
We have collected food in plenty, and there is still a quantity
left to collect. The pastures, like the trees, are green again;
our herds have water to satisfy their thirst in the wells and water

[133 cont.]

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holes. They are fat and have increased. We are neither short of meat nor milk nor fruit...." He from the north then speaks, saying, "I, my friend, am full of woe. I suffer from anxiety, fearing hunger this coming winter. My herds died of thirst beside the dry wells. I have no other food than the fruit of the cardon and the prickly pear. I have to travel long and painful distances so that my hungry herds can find pasture and water. The summer is cruel. The sun burnt the seedlings and the grass." He of the south again intervenes, this time to invite his friend in these or similar words, "Seeing things are thus with you, my brother, why not come with us to our country, to Lower La Guajira. There you will find green pastures and overflowing water holes for your herds. Come with your wife and nephews [and nieces, sobrinos] because there will be food for you all. There the winter is good; we shall expect you."

Finally the one from Upper La Guajira says "Yes, I will go with you. I will leave here with my starving herds and with my people who are in dire need and poverty...." After this the two groups unite, embrace each other at the waist, and walk off together in the direction of Lower La Guajira. So ends the play.

2. Intercian war. As in the previous case, two teams are formed headed by their singing leaders, but this time women do not take part directly. The play starts when a player of one of the teams walks up to the other and pretends to kill one of its members. The latter acts as if he were wounded, twists and squirms on the ground, then dies. The assailant leaves him lying there and flees to his own group and hides himself. The singer then starts up his song, stating that the cause of the killing was jealousy because the victim was attempting to make love to the killer's wife, or he was the lucky rival in winning a girl they were both courting. The other team sees the death of their member and hastens [134] to pick him up. They make grand gestures of fury and demand vengeance, and the singer of this group expresses the rage of his clan; he threatens the opposite group whom he accuses in insulting language and ends by declaring his bitter enmity. Shortly afterward comes the scene of the compensation payment negotiations in which the arbitrator of the murdered man's clan visits the aggressor group to demand payment for the

[136 cont.]

offense received, asking for a very large sum, stating how passionately angry his clan is and warning them that if the sum demanded is not met war will be the inevitable consequence. The singer continues: "Pay for my nephew because you have spilled his blood and by that you have caused us great sorrow. I ask in a kindly manner that you do so unless you want to bring upon yourselves our hatred, if you do not want us to kill your nephews and despoil your people of their herds, to fill up your wells and burn down the homes of your relatives. If our just claim is not met we will carry off your women, your children and nephews and nieces as slaves. Pay!"

The aggressor band collects a number of children -- who are to represent cattle -- necklaces, etc., and hand these over to the contenders. But their singer states that it is too little, that his clan demands more. He orders the other clan to take back their offering and states that as they have not complied with the stipulations of their agreement that they must prepare to pay their debt with their own blood. War is declared. Each band concentrates on arming itself; they collect young cardons which they split in strips to serve as weapons.

The singer of the murdered man's clan again sings: "Get ready, my sons and nephews. We are about to attack our enemies, to collect for the blood of our brother as they have not paid us what they owe. But do not thoughtlessly expose yourselves. Be careful. Attack, but keep well protected behind trees and cardons. Take careful aim. Do not let yourselves be beaten, or we in future will be called cowards and will not be respected. No one then will pay us for our women, and we shall be despised by all. In all La Guajira they will know the story of our defeat, which will be converted into mockery and contempt."

The leader of the group to which the killer belongs sings: "My nephews, be prepared. Very soon these people will arrive to attack us, so be ready for war. Do not be neglectful even for one minute because they will arrive suddenly with the intention of burning our homes, of stealing our herds, destroying our sources of water, and taking our women and children for slaves. Fight and aim well. We shall destroy them."

D. Fiesta Glendale--LSD 8-9 (1947) 1950 GC18 Graglia GC18

[136 cont.]

536 537 546 After the leaders of each group have sung these harangues, which are characteristic of those delivered by the chiefs in war, the attack comes. Those who engage in the combat pretend to leave at dawn (all this the leader relates to in his song) in order to fall suddenly on their enemies. With the piles of cardons they shoot at each other. The defenders run away, leaving the field covered [136] with the dead. In the combat they will incite each other. On throwing the cardon they imitate the noise of the explosion and the whistle of the bullets when fired. Each one seeks shelter where he can find it and dodges blows. Those that are touched by thrown missiles fall, screaming that they are wounded, and pretend to die. The chiefs harangue their men: "Shoot well my nephews or else they will think we are cowards."

536 546 When all the projectiles are used up, each band gathers in bodies. The one with the most casualities has lost the battle. At this moment the women come on the scene to mourn the dead of their clan. They cover their faces with pañosles and, kneeling over a corpse, they cry pitifully. Then they go to bury their dead, and so ends the representation of the puriki.

3. The devil and the Indians. In this dramatization a male Indian covers himself with a black robe, imitating the devil, or yurujú. The devil appears walking in the fields, and an Indian steps out to meet him. The devil with great experience grips him by the nostrils with his thumb and first finger and throws him to the ground. The Indian is killed. This scene in which the devil always participates but each time with different Indians is repeated three times with the same result, until in the end all the Indians who act in the play unite against the devil and kill him. The devil disappears, but after a short interval he returns to the scene. A new struggle starts up, but this time the devil wins because he kills all the Indians, men and women, who take part in the fight. Later he withdraws and takes off the robe, thus ending the play.

4. The devil and the cloud. The Indians take off their robes and make a kind of tent with them into which they all go. This tent is meant to represent smoke or a cloud. Inside, the Indians

(136 cont.)

pressed to be eating and playing cowpilly. The devil, another Indian, taking advantage of the carelessness of the men who are occupied with their fun, and covered as always with his black robe, causes the cloud to do them evil. Immediately a fight ensues up between the Indians and the devil. In the end the cloud traps the devil and emerges triumphant in the play.

5. The horse race. Horse racing is the sport or trial of prowess most practiced in the ordinary life of the Guajiro. In this sport they try to bring to the fore the name of the horse and the skill of the jockey. In all the large fiestas a number of horse races are always staged, and such is their enthusiasm for them that they are frequently mentioned in some stories told by the natives. (138)

During the Fiesta of the Kid two groups are formed which, as in the previous races, are under the direction of their respective leaders. Each group has assigned to it an equal number of men, representing as many race horses. The race course having been previously marked out with its starting point and finishing post, one of the singers begins by referring to the goodness of his horse, praising its speediness. The other replies in an identical vein, using eulogistic concepts regarding his animal. They even arrange a match which they put into practice. One of them says: "There goes my race horse; he is swifter than the clouds and the wind and braver than any other in La Guajira." The other sings: "This is my chestnut horse. I am sure that he will win because he is swifter than the deer." They start off their horses and run the race. Following these, race another pair, then another, until all the competitors have taken part.

The bees and the fruit thieves. There is a kind of small bee in the peninsula which the Indians call wáya. These bees make their nests in trees or in hollow tree trunks. If a blow is struck near the hive, the bees swarm out, attacking and getting into the hair of anybody standing nearby. They get inside the intruders' clothes and swarm all over them, crawling over their bodies, buzzing angrily, bothering their enemies until they are in a state of desperation. The Indians have a habit of collecting hives of these bees and placing them at the entrance to their fields, making use of the bees to defend their harvest from thieves.

[136 cont.]

536 In the scene two groups appear: one representing the bees in the
796 hive; the other, the thieves who want to steal the crops of the field. The bee group is placed at the entrance to the field, arranged in compact form to look like the hives. The robbers begin to arrive and try to enter the field to steal the ripe fruit, but in the attempt they brush against the hives. The bees swarm out, buzzing and attacking the thieves, who decamp pursued by the bees. These punish the men to the best of their ability and thus prevent the harvest being stolen.

223 7. Hunting the jirijir. The natives know a small bird called jirijir that appears in La Guajira during harvest time and devours the products of the fields. The Indians hunt them assiduously in order to defend their crops as well as to use them for [042] food, since they are fat and pleasant tasting. The method they use to catch them is as follows. This small bird generally always flies in a straight line, entering invariably at some determined point and leaving by another in a precise manner. The Indian takes advantage of this [137] observation; hence when he goes to his crops at the times these birds are settling, he provides himself with hammocks or large nets. He places his hammocks at the point where the birds will fly out and then waits their arrival. He frightens them and immediately with great rapidity covers their point of exit, and the birds are trapped in the net, falling into it by the hundreds.

536 This scene is represented in the ceremony that we are
796 describing. At the beginning, various Indians who will act as the hammocks, that is, as those who will attempt to trap the birds in their nets are found in a group apart. Some children are grouped in the middle of the space to represent the field, and a third band formed of adults will act as birds.

When everything is ready, the last group begins to move, and they approach making motions as if flying and making a peculiar noise, imitating the call of the jirijir. They fall on the group of children, that is, on the field. A new group, this time composed of women, intervene in the scene to frighten the birds with yells and noisy clapping of hands. The birds try to escape as a flock, following the straight line of flight they are accustomed

[137 cont.]

to, always making their peculiar call. In this way they pass over the place where the hammock men are in position; they are arranged two by two in a semicircle, hands held right in left, forming quadrilaterals. The birds reach this point running at the greatest speed possible, when the hammock men stop them by surrounding them to prevent their escape. They struggle, but in the end the semicircle begins to close until it becomes a circle, and the birds are imprisoned inside. An Indian then comes to kill the birds. He does so by taking them one by one by the arm as if this were the wing and by pretending to wring their necks. Once all the birds are taken out from the net the scene ends.

8. Jaguars and dogs. This theatrical game is intended to show the fortitude and courage of the jaguar and its superiority over dogs. For this reason it requires much care in the selection of the Indians who will take part in it because they must struggle fiercely with each other, and it is essential that the team that plays the part of jaguars be the conquerors. This has caused us to believe in the mythical value of the jaguar, which actually appears in their legends related to Mareiwa as well as in clan nomenclature. The game consists in engaging in a severe struggle in which the jaguar always manages to overcome the dogs and dominate them through being stronger. The complete description can be summed up thus: The group of jaguars pretends to be settled in a tree; sometimes they actually are. The group representing the dogs arrives, following the scent and the trail until they come to the foot of the tree [138] in which the jaguars are all lurking. On finding them, the dogs bark furiously beneath the tree and provoke the jaguars until they jump down, and it is then that the terrible struggle takes place. When in the end a dog falls to the ground, the jaguar pretends to bite it to pieces, clawing its breast open and attacking its throat, where he starts to devour it. The dog whimpers painfully, goes into convulsions, and stays motionless, as if dead. The jaguar gets up satisfied as he has triumphed, and so ends the play.

9. Dogs and peccaries. Two groups are formed, each one composed of ten men arranged in line and captained, as is customary, by a singer, who is the chief of the group. One group represents the peccaries, the other the dogs which are going to hunt them.

[138 cont.]

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The play starts when the peccaries gather in a group, pretending by their position and their movements that they are inside the cave which is their refuge. The chief of the dog group begins to sing while these gather round him, and he harangues them to go in and kill the peccaries and not let themselves be beaten by them. The group of peccaries answer threateningly and hasten to defend themselves. The dogs approach their prey cautiously and single out one from among the group. A struggle starts between a dog and one of the peccaries, both fighting desperately for mastery, each player striving to grab his adversary by his loincloth to lift him in the air and throw him to the ground. The struggle is fierce and stubborn, because they usually select the most hardened fighters and well-muscled men to represent both the peccaries and the dogs. It continues until one of the combatants is floored by the other, in which case he admits defeat. The winner's group marks up one point. When the first pair have finished their match, a new one is started between two other Indians, and so on successively until all the representatives of the two groups have participated. In the development of the personal struggles between dog and peccary, each singer incites his man, exhorts him to greater efforts, etc. Finally, they add up the score of points obtained by each group, and the winner receives a prize, consisting generally of food.

10. The fox and the rabbit. Three personages take part in this act: one who acts as a fox, one as a rabbit, and a child who has the role of a watermelon [patilla]. The game consists in seeing which of the two animals, the fox or the rabbit, will get the watermelon they are fighting for. Both of them want to steal it. So each one of them seizes the child (who is twelve or thirteen years old) by an arm, and he who can pull him away from the other is considered the winner. [139]

To better understand this play, it is well to state that while in La Guajira we collected a story about the fox and the rabbit which is published in Revista de Folklore (67) in which there is also

67. Pineda Giraldo, Roberto. "La Chama, un mito guajiro" [The Chama, a Guajiro Myth],

526 [139 cont.]
536 shown a test of cunning between these two animals. In this tale, the rabbit is the winner.
946

11. The man and the wild boar. One man takes the part of a wild boar, the other that of the man who stalks it. The hunter follows the boar, which runs swiftly away, dodging the hunter's arrows in its flight. In this trial of dexterity, the hunter will be the winner if in the end he wounds the boar with one of the arrows he shoots; or it will be the boar that triumphs if it is able to tire out its persecutor and dodge all the arrows shot at it.

12. The hunter, the dog, and the rabbit. This play is another trial of dexterity, as the end in view is to try the ability of each actor in the role assigned to him. It represents, in short, a hunting party, in which the man and the dog try to capture and kill the rabbit. The dog tries to catch it and tear it to pieces, while the man follows at a greater distance, throwing stones at it. If he manages to hit it, the rabbit acts as if killed, giving the victory to the huntsman. The result is the same if the dog is successful in catching his prey with his claws, but if the rabbit should evade both of them, showing greater ability and speed than the other two, he becomes the winner of the test.

536 13. The song of the serpent. We have left this section to
946 terminate our study of the theater in La Guajira because it presents characteristics different from all the other representations which we have described. It does not involve a demonstration of skill or force, nor does it require the intervention of contending
[533] groups in any way. In consequence there is no dialogue, but there is a monologue sung by the leader of the group followed by all the actors, in which the deeds of the serpent are recounted

As a clarifying note we refer our reader to the chapter "Sickness and Medicine," in which this reptile's magic power is clearly evident, especially in relation to pregnant women and all that surrounds them. We also would recall that, as in the case of
[614] the jaguar, the serpent [140] figures in the naming of the clans, at times in close association with the jaguar.

The act develops as follows: A line is formed of alternate men and women who take each other's hands. They run with short steps, undulating to copy the motion of a serpent when

536 [140 cont.]
moving along the ground. Headed by their leader they all continue to sing the song of the serpent, saying more or less the following: "I am the snake. I drag myself along the ground. [539] I do harm to no one. But he who dares to step on me because I am on the ground gets his punishment. I bite him and wound him. At times I kill him. He has to stay in bed and suffer for a long time as a punishment for having trodden on me and for thinking that I am helpless because I drag myself along the ground...." This song is repeated several times. [141]

IX

Mareiwa and Wanurú

or

Notions of Good and Evil

Through all the preceding chapters we have tried to explain clearly what constitutes the magic life of the Guajiro, which is almost the same as saying his spiritual life, and in passing we have mentioned the presence and activities of beings with higher powers than ordinary mortals, able to do good or evil according to which being intervenes in each particular case. We have thus touched on two fundamental ideas: good and evil.

Our interest is now concentrated in trying to elucidate the quality of these spirits, or supernatural beings. These can be very seriously confused owing particularly to the influence of acculturation and more specifically to the pressure exerted by missionaries in their prosletyzing function. So great is the misapplication of terms and concepts in this world of ideas that we might call the religious, that even the Guajiro mythology has been transformed by the use of terms which have a pejorative and degrading effect on the Guajiro people (68).

68. This statement is based on the legend which we obtained orally from